GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2294
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2017
Indians Jailed Abroad
Choudhary Col. (Retd) Sona Ram;Khan Shri Md. Badariddoza;Kumar Shri P.;Salim Shri Mohammad

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians imprisoned in various foreign jails particularly in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the articles seized from them;

(b) the details of various mechanisms to check them cross International Border;

(c) whether the Government is aware of herdsmen rearing cattle on Indo-Pak border particularly the border adjoining Rajasthan being lodged in Pakistan jails and being awarded punishment by Pakistan courts, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Government is taking any concrete action to get the Indian captives released and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) Due to the strict provisions of privacy laws, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and many countries in Europe do not share information about Indian nationals in their prisons. However, as per information available, 7059 Indian nationals are lodged in foreign jails. A list showing country-wise details is attached at Annexure. Various articles seized from them include VOIP set along with SIM cards, fake passports, narcotic drugs, fake currency, boats, GPS, stimulating tablets, foreign currency and gold.

(b) Our immigration authorities and security forces monitor the movement across the international borders of the country.

(c) There are two prisoners from Rajasthan in the jails in Pakistan who are not herdsmen.

(d) As soon as the information about detention/arrest of an Indian national is received by an Indian Mission/Post, it gets in touch with the local Foreign Office and other concerned local authorities to get consular access to the detained/arrested Indian national to confirm their Indian nationality and ensure their welfare. In some countries where pro bono lawyers are available, the Mission arranges legal assistance to the Indian prisoners. Government of India also provides initial legal assistance to distressed Indian nationals in deserving cases.

Steps taken by our Missions include requesting local authorities for speedy trials, seeking remission of sentence, providing advice and guidance in legal and other matters, ensuring fair and humane treatment in foreign jails, issue of emergency certificates and repatriation to India of those who are released. In some countries, our Mission also requests the local government for grant of amnesty to the arrested Indians and if any mercy petition for remission of sentences is received from the family members of the Indian prisoners, the Mission forwards them to the local authorities for consideration. India has signed Treaties for Transfer of Sentenced Persons with 42 countries, under which Indian prisoners have been brought back to India from some of these countries.

In those cases where Indian nationals complete their sentences and are waiting for completion of deportation formalities, Indian Missions and Posts in those countries take up with the respective foreign governments the speeding up of the process, including issue of final Exit Visas, waiver of penalties imposed on Indian workers, etc. from the concerned authorities and for the early return of the Indian nationals to India. Where required, the Indian Missions and Posts abroad also provide airfares for facilitating the return of the Indian prisoners who have completed their sentences, to India.
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